The Forgotten Summer by Bernie18

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Summary:

Melanie Bennett never wanted to move to Derry, Maine. Unfortunately, her parents were dead, and her remaining relatives lived there. Three years later, Melanie has gotten used to the town. There were good and bad things about it. Soon, however, she will have to deal with the worst thing about the town.

The Forgotten Summer

Author's Note:

> I'm not sure if I should leave a trigger warning for racism or not. A character does call my black oc a gorilla, but it's more out of dislike than racism.
> Face claim for Melanie Bennett: Skai Jackson

Melanie Bennett entered her science class. It was her last class of the day and of the school year. She went to sit at her assigned table. Her science partner, Bill Denbrough, was already sitting down with their bridge.

The science teacher, Mr. Nell, had decided to allow the students a fun activity for the last month of class. They were supposed to build bridges out of popsicle sticks. One the last day of class, they were going to test which bridge was the strongest by putting weights on them.

“Hey, M-m-m-Melanie,” Bill greeted, smiling at her.

Melanie’s heart fluttered. “Hi, Bill,” she greeted back.

“H-h-how’s your da-day been,” asked Bill.

“Fine,” Melanie replied. “Well, except for that class I had with Greta Keene.”

Greta Keene was the daughter of the town pharmacist. She was also the meanest girl in school. She bullied anyone she considered beneath her. However, Greta seemed to have a special contempt for Melanie and her best friend Beverly Marsh. She hated Bev because of her “reputation” and Melanie for an altercation they had in the 5th grade.

Melanie had English class with Greta earlier today. Their teacher, Mrs. Douglas, decided it would be fun to have everyone in the class to share their summer plans. *She clearly has a different definition of fun* , Melanie remembered thinking.

When it had been Melanie's turn, she hadn't been able to even utter a word when Greta cute. "Are you going to visit the other gorillas at the zoo," she sneered at Melanie.

The entire class (except her cousin Mike Hanlon and Stan Uris) had laughed. Melanie had looked down at her desk in embarrassment and anger. Sure, it hadn't been the first time Greta had called her a gorilla or gorilla girl, but that doesn't mean it didn't upset her any less.

"Gr-Gr-Greta sucks," said Bill sympathetically.

"That's an understatement," Melanie commented. They both chuckled. "Do you think our bridge will do okay?"

Bill shrugged. "I-I hope suh-suh-suh-so."

"Alright, lads and lasses," announced Mr. Nell. "Class has begun. Ye need to be quiet."

Mr. Nell was an Irishman that moved to America in his teens. Many students found it amusing to mock his accent.

"Ye heard the good sir," Richie Tozier mimicked. "Quiet down now."

Richie was one of them. He probably did it more often than anyone else in the class. He was called Trashmouth for a reason.

"Master Tozier, I believe yer accent has gotten worse," quipped Mr. Nell.

Everyone in the class laughed. "I say, Master Nell popped off a good one," Richie continued in his terrible accent.

Mr. Nell rolled his eyes. "If you're quite done Master Tozier, I would like to continue with class," he sternly said.

"Well, go on then, lad." Richie really wasn't letting up.

Mr. Nell sighed and then continued, "Alright, I hope ye have yer bridges ready. It's time to test them."

Bill and Melanie's bridge ended up doing okay. It had broken after

having 50 pounds on it. Had it been a contest, they would've won fourth place.

After all their bridges had been tested, Mr. Nell had given them free time. Melanie had planned to read a book she bought, but that plan quickly changed.

"H-H-Hey, Melanie. D-D-Do yuh-you want to c-c-c-come ha-hang out with m-m-m-me and my fr-fr-friends u-u-u-until school ends," Bill offered.

Melanie was stunned for a moment. Sure, she liked Bill and got along with him, but they didn't talk much outside of class.

"Oh, well, I don't want to bother you guys," Melanie nervously said.

"Yuh-yuh-ou won't," assured Bill.

"Okay, then," she agreed.

Melanie grabbed her chair and followed Bill to the table Richie and Eddie Kaspbrak sat at. When they approached the table, Richie and Eddie were arguing.

"There's no way you can make a better loogie than me," Richie said.

"Fuck you, Trashmouth," argued Eddie. "Yes, I can."

"H-Hey, guys," Bill interrupted. He and Melanie put their chairs across the table from Eddie and Richie. They sat down.

"Hey, Big Bill," greeted Richie. He looked at Melanie. "And who is this lovely lady?"

Melanie smiled, pleasantly surprised by Richie's statement.

Eddie gave Richie an annoyed look. "You know who she is," he complained.

"Quiet, Eds! I'm trying to be charming," Richie claimed.

"Don't call me Eds," shouted Eddie.

“Are they always like this,” Melanie whispered to Bill.

“Yuh-yuh-yeah,” responded Bill. “Yuh-You get u-u-used tuh-tuh-o it.”

“What are you two whispering about,” Eddie questioned, turning his attention to Bill and Melanie.

“Obviously, they’re flirting, Eds,” said Richie, smirking at them.

“No, we weren’t,” Melanie immediately denied.

“Aw, don’t break Bill’s heart like that, Mellie.”

“B-b-beep beep, R-R-R-Richie,” Bill said.

Melanie furrowed her eyebrows. “Mellie?” No one called her that.

“Yeah, it’s a nickname.”

“Most people just call me Melanie or Mel.”

“That’s boring. Mellie sounds better. Oh, or Mellie Jelly!”

“Please, don’t call me that,” begged Melanie.

“He won’t listen to you,” Eddie informed. “Once he gives you a nickname, you’re stuck with it.”

Richie wrapped an arm around Eddie’s shoulder. “You know me so well, Eddie spaghetti,” he playfully said.

Eddie shoved him away. “Fuck you.”

“Aw, don’t be like that, Eds.”

“I swear to god…”

“So, M-m-m-Melanie,” interrupted Bill before another argument could break out, “wuh-wuh-what’s that b-b-book you h-have a-a-a-bout?”

“Photography,” Melanie responded. Mike had given it to her for her birthday to go with the camera her aunt and uncle had bought her. She hadn’t gotten around to reading it until recently.

“Do yuh-yuh-ou ha-have a ca-ca-mera?”

“Yeah.”

“Wait, if you have a camera, how come we’ve never seen you with it,” interjected Richie, joining the conversation.

“I mostly leave it at home because of Bowers,” Melanie explained.

“Oh. Well, that makes sense.”

Greta Keene was bad, but Melanie would much rather deal with her than the Bowers Gang, especially Henry Bowers and Patrick Hockstetter. Those two were the worst of the bunch. While their other friends, Belch Huggins and Victor Criss, weren’t saints, they seemed to have limits. The same could not be said about Henry and Patrick.

Bringing up Bowers had led to a conversation about the worse thing he and his friends had done to them. It wasn’t a nice conversation, but it was something they could talk about. Eddie talked about Henry giving him a bloody nose; Bill mentioned Victor and Belch throwing paint on him during art class; Richie described how Patrick took a shit in his backpack.

“It still can’t believe he did that,” commented Eddie after Richie finished his story.

Melanie wrinkled her nose. “You don’t still have the same backpack, right.”

“Of course not. What do you take me for,” Richie said, feigning offense. They all chuckled. “What about you?”

“Huh,” said Melanie.

“What’s the worst thing Bowers or one of his friends has done to you?”

That question wiped the smile off Melanie’s face. She felt stupid for not considering the fact that the boys would want to hear from her. Why wouldn’t they? She brought up Bowers in the first place, and

they all told her their experiences.

“Um, I guess it was that time Bowers knocked me off my bike back, and I ended up scrapping my knee,” she lied. It wasn’t a complete lie; it had happened.

Bill nodded. “I remember that,” he said. He had helped patch her up after it happened. It was the first time they had ever talked.

“Why are they all assholes to everyone,” complained Eddie.

“I don’t know about the others, but my uncle says Henry acts the way he does because of his father,” Melanie responded. “He called him a turd, too.”

Bill, Richie, and Eddie all had a good laugh at that last part. They continued to talk about several other things. One of them included their friend Stan Uris and his Bar Mitzvah.

“There’s a church full of Jews, and Stan has to take the super Jewy test,” Eddie claimed when she and Bill asked what was supposed to happen during it.

“B-but how d-d-does it wuh-work,” inquired Bill, still not understanding.

“They slice the tip of his dick off.”

“No way,” Melanie said in disbelief.

“But then Stan will have nothing left,” exclaimed Richie.

“It’s true,” Eddie said.

Before the discussion could continue, the bell rang. School was out; summer had begun. Everyone was hurrying to grab their things and leave.

Mr. Nell spoke over the commotion, “ I hope ye have a great summer and remember to be careful.”

Melanie and Bill took their chairs back to their table. “Later, Bill,”

Melanie said.

As she went to leave the classroom, Bill called out her, “M-M-Melanie.”

She turned back to him. “Yeah.”

“Uh-uh-uh… n-n-nothing. I j-j-just h-h-hope to s-s-see you a-a-around this su-su-summer,” nervously said Bill.

Melanie smiled at him. “I hope so, too. Bye.”

“Bye.”

Melanie left the classroom slightly disappointed. She had hoped maybe Bill would invite her to hang out. Sure, she could have done the same, but she feared rejection too much.

If her mother had been there, she would have said, *Sometimes doing something you’re afraid can be worth the fear.*

It was good advice. Maybe, she would follow it… one day. Today was not it.